

SPRING FLOWERS
AND
SUMMER BLOSSOMS
FOR THE YOUNG & GOOD

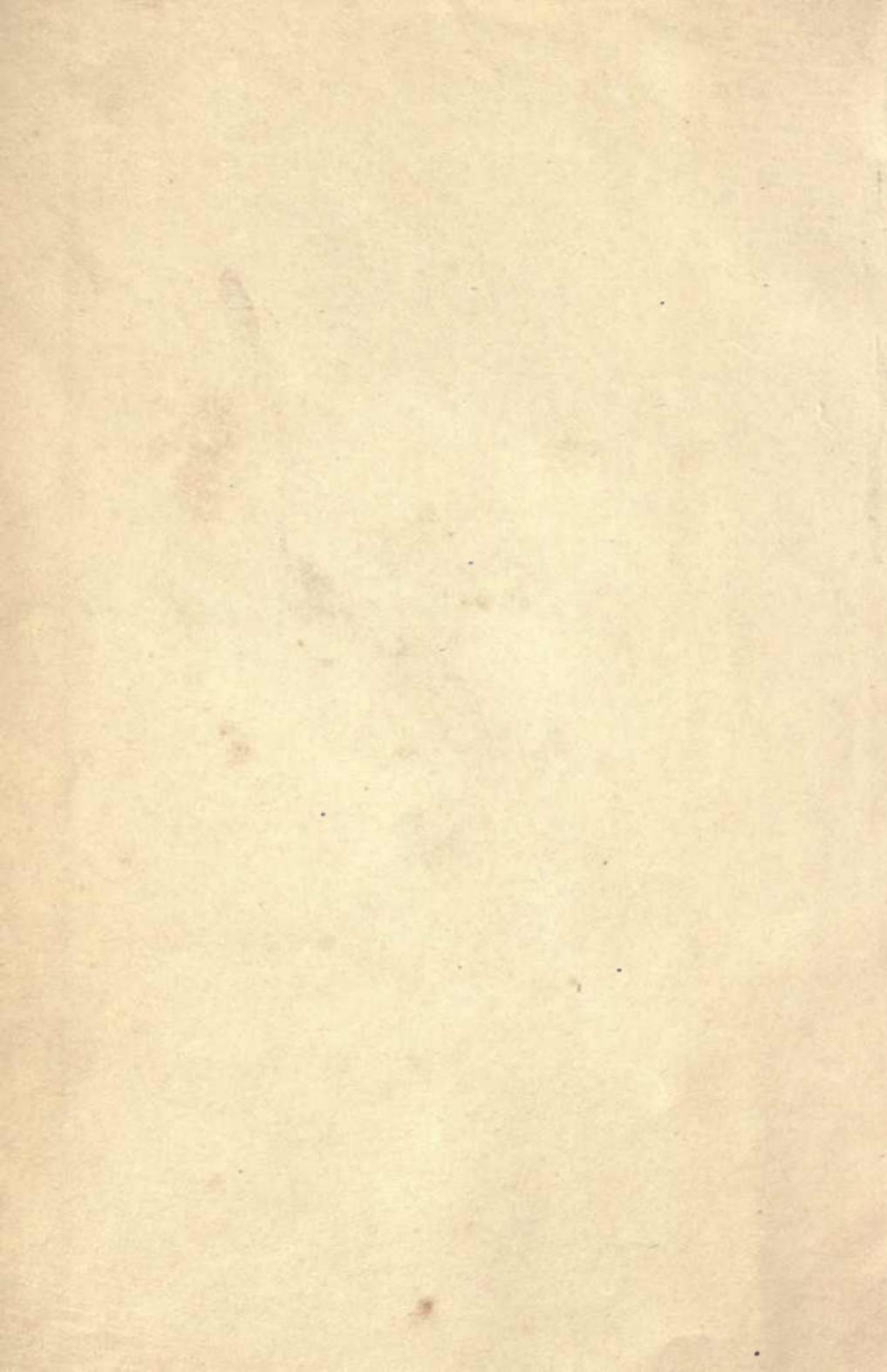
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For dear Nata with best love.

1852.





SPRING FLOWERS AND SUMMER BLOSSOMS

THE SNOW DROP

MAY FLOWERS

THE WALL FLOWER

ALMOND BLOSSOM

COWSLIPS

PRIMROSES
& DAISIES



LONDON.

THOMAS, DEAN AND SON.
THREADNEEDLE STREET.



PREFACE.

THAT there is an inherent love in the minds of children for all that is beautiful and bright in nature, is a truth none can doubt: Spring brings with her all that is glad, all that is lively, and a promise of beauties for the future. In this profusion of charms, which delight so many senses, why should it be a season in which no “Spring Annuals” for Children make their appearance? Christmas brings an ample store of these bright little books, and

PREFACE.

childrens' eyes beam with pleasure as they look on them.

Therefore may we not hope that an unexpected Little Wreath of May Blossoms, will at least afford some amusement and instruction to its little readers, even though it boasts no higher pretensions ?

F.





SPRING FLOWERS.

SOn the evening of creation,
God, from His throne in heaven,
Saw that no wordly blessing
Was unto man ungiven:

He gazed upon the beauteous earth,
And where HIS glances fell,
There sprang the sweet Spring Flowers,
That children love so well.

He made them all so beautiful,
In the fulness of His love,
That, by their gentle influence,
Young hearts might turn above.

They twine around the being
 Of childhood's earliest years,
 And mingle with its brightest hopes,
 And chase away its tears.

The sight of long-forgotten flowers,
 Will call the spirit back,
 (When years have travelled over us,)
 To many a woodland track.

We are in the pleasant meadows,
 By the water-brook, once more,
 And the old, old love of flowers,
 Creeps on us, as of yore.

Men have their golden treasures,
 With what such treasures bring:
 And, little children,—what have they?
 The Flowers of the Spring!

M.





THE SNOW-DROP.

ELLEN GREY.



OULD you not like to hear about little Ellen Grey? I think you would, so I shall begin and tell you what a nice little happy girl she was, and in what a pretty cottage, in a beautiful village in Hampshire, she lived.

Before she was four years old, her dear papa died, far away from home;

for he was an officer, and went with his regiment to a foreign country, and he never returned again, to see his dear wife and his little darling.

Ellen was too young to remember him; but she used, sometimes, to talk to her mamma about him; and Mrs. Grey would tell her how good and brave he was, and how kind to every one; how dearly he loved his little girl; and how he hoped that dear Ellen would grow up good and amiable, to please her mamma; and that then, when she died, she would go up to beautiful glorious heaven, where her dear papa (through the mercy of God) was; and, perhaps, looking down thence on his dear child, and watching all her actions.

Sometimes Mrs. Grey would weep very much, as she told her all this, and kiss little Ellen, who looked sad, too, when she saw her mamma cry. And then she would say, “Never mind, mamma, I will not ask you any more; but I will be so good, so very good, and will try so to go to heaven, to see dear papa.” Then Mrs. Grey would smile sadly, and give her a kiss, and send her into the garden to play.

There Ellen would take her little camp stool, and sit in the shade of a large chestnut tree, and would try to fancy what her papa was like, and whether, from the bright place he was in, he could look down on her; and then she would talk in a little low whisper, and say, “My good,

kind papa, I hope I shall one day come up to see you in God's beautiful blue sky." And then she would look up at the clear blue sky, and the clouds, tinged with crimson and bright gold by the setting sun, and wonder what lovely lands lay beyond those spots; and think how very good she must try to be, ever to go up there.

Mrs. Grey lived in a small cottage, for she was not rich, (indeed few officers' widows are,) but it was a very pretty cottage, with a thatched roof, and a little verandah covered with roses, honeysuckles, and clematis. Besides these, there was a nice garden and lawn, and in one corner of the flower-bed, Ellen had a piece of ground to herself.

Here she planted and gardened in her own way ; and you would have smiled to see the odd experiments she made ; for sometimes she would plant seeds, one day, and dig them up the next, to see if they were growing. And then she planted the mustard and cress, in the shape of the letters of her name ; but as she did not ask how to spell “Ellen,” she was rather shocked to find it come up “Len.” Now, you will allow this had a strange appearance, and she could not say it was the fault of the mustard and cress. However, she cut it off very quickly, and made a salad of it, rather before it had grown the usual time.

Her garden was looking rather untidy now, for it was Autumn, and

all the dead leaves were scattered about, and the poor flowers hung their heads, and seemed plainly to say, “Our old enemy, Winter, is coming; we must hide ourselves for a long time, until beautiful bright Spring comes, and calls us into life once more.”

Now, one rather cold windy day, when there had been several showers, and the leaves were still dropping with wet, little Ellen and her mamma wrapped themselves well up, and took several quick turns in the garden. Ellen was very merry, and kept running through the little heaps of dead leaves, as they laid on the gravel walks. At last, stopping short in her gambols at a heap of broken flowers, “Mamma,” said she,

“you promised me that you would let the gardener plant some snow-drops in my own little plot; if he might now do so, they would come up, early next year.”

“Why do you prefer snow-drops, my dear Ellen? there are many prettier flowers, I think.”

“Yes, mamma! but then, you know, a snow-drop is the very first flower that peeps its little tiny head through the ground; and then, mamma, the name; that is so pretty. I always think, when I see a snow-drop in its long dark green leaves, that it really seems as if a little white drop of snow had remained on them, to show us that winter was only just gone. Perhaps that is the reason they are called snow-drops?”

Mrs. Grey smiled, and told her little daughter that she might ask the gardener to put some snow-drops into her own little garden, and then, next spring, she would have them of her own.

“ Next year? ah, mamma, mamma! what a dreadfully long time to wait; it is such a pity that there is that cold, bleak, long winter to come: how I wish it was over!”

“ Ah! Ellen, you little know what you are saying. Have you not always been very happy in the winter, with our nice blazing fire, our cheerful lamp, our pretty stories, and our Christmas amusements? have you not spoken thoughtlessly!”

“ Well, I know I like all that; but I know, too, I hate getting up in

the cold mornings, shivering and shaking; and I do not like having no flowers, and not being able to run about in the garden. Oh, no mamma, I still say, how I wish Spring was here."

"We shall see," said Mrs. Grey, as she turned towards home, for the evenings were getting cold and damp.

Well, Winter came at last; and there was ice and snow, bleak winds and frosts; the flowers all dead, and the trees looking sad and leafless, as they bent to and fro under the cutting blasts. Ellen had to get up and walk out in the cold, and yet she was happy, very happy. How delicious the walks on a clear frosty day! how the snowy blades of

grass crackled under her little feet ! how brightly the pearly drops hung from every bough ! and even the spiders'-webs in the hedges sparkled and shone like little threads of precious stones. Then Ellen had two dear little cousins staying with her, and they, Emma and Fanny, were also full of joy, having just come from school, to pass Christmas with their kind Aunt Grey. What games of Blindman's-buff, and Puss-in-the-corner ! what amusing stories, and how they enjoyed Twelfth-night, and the German tree !

I dare say all my little friends have heard of a German tree ; but should they not, I must tell them about it. A small fir-tree is planted in a gay-looking flower-pot, every

bough is ornamented with coloured tapers, little presents also being suspended from the branches ; and when the tapers are all lighted up at supper time, it has a very gay and very pretty effect. Mrs. Grey had provided them a beautiful Christmas tree of this description ; and the children were all much delighted with it, and with the pretty gifts hanging from its branches ; nor were the poor forgotten on the occasion ; for Ellen and her two friends made some useful and appropriate presents to the children of the little village.

On New Year's day, their grand-mamma sent a new doll for each of the little friends. Such beauties had never before been seen in the country. Their eyes opened, and their

arms and legs were wax, and they were all drest as neatly as babies. Never were happier children, and little Ellen was heard to say, when her cousins left, "Mamma was right, quite right; Winter is very agreeable; I really am sorry it passes so quickly."

Winter was departing, and the sun began to shine out brightly, the birds to sing, and little soft green buds to appear on every branch. The gardener was busy planting and arranging the flower-beds, and the early Spring, which little Ellen had so wished for, was approaching. But where is she now? why not playing in her garden?—Alas! she is sitting alone in her little room, weeping bitterly; her dear, dear mamma, is

dangerously ill, and she has just overheard Dr. Barnett say to the nurse, “I fear poor Mrs. Grey will not recover.”

Ah ! my little readers, have you ever thought how sad a thing it is to know that some one you dearly love is about to be snatched away from you by death ? It is an awful thought, and we should indeed be good in this world, and pray for understanding and submission, to enable us to meet such afflictions.

Poor Ellen wept until she could no longer shed a tear, and she threw herself on her knees, and her old nurse coming in, heard her saying a little prayer : “Oh, God, listen to a poor little child, very, very unhappy. Save my dear mamma, if it be thy

holy will ; I know thy beloved Son loved little children, and blessed them. Oh, heavenly Father, hear my prayer :—I have no father, on earth ;—leave, oh leave me, my dear, dear mamma.”

All that day, little Ellen spent in praying and weeping, and even her kind old nurse could not persuade her to eat a morsel of food. Dr. Barnett had desired that she might not go to her mamma, who was now quite insensible, from the violence of the fever, which had come on rapidly. At last, the poor little exhausted child threw herself on the rug on the floor ; and there, with her cheeks still wet with tears, and her little hands clasped in prayer, fell fast asleep.





About ten o'clock at night, Dr. Barnett, with the nurse, came in, and did not see poor Ellen, who was waking from her disturbed sleep; she heard him say to nurse, "Really this is a most favourable change. A few more hours of such refreshing sleep, and perfect quiet, and I should consider all danger past."

Now Ellen had always had a little dislike to Dr. Barnett, although he was a very kind-hearted man; but recollections of the disagreeable cough mixtures prescribed by him during her last attack of cold, had lately induced her to hide herself whenever he called; but now she started up, and throwing her arms round his neck, to his great surprise, began kissing and hugging him, as she

said, “you dear, kind Dr. Barnett: I promise you, I will take all your cough stuffs this very minute, if you like, only make my mamma better.” Dr. Barnett smiled, and kissed the dear pale girl; talked kindly to her; had a little wine brought for her; and at last she was persuaded to go to bed.

The next morning, nurse came with the joyful intelligence that her dear mamma was really better; and you may be sure Ellen did not forget to thank God, most devoutly, in her prayers.

From that time, Mrs. Grey’s health gradually improved, and though still very weak, she was soon able to have her child with her.

For hours, little Ellen would sit

by her mamma's bed side, prattling sweetly, and doing all she could to amuse her; reading the Bible stories, and other little books; and never once wishing to go and play in the garden. And so passed some of the early days in spring.

It was on one of those lovely days when Mrs. Grey (who had been carried down into the drawing-room) told Ellen to go and amuse herself a little while on the lawn. Ellen went, but her step was slower than usual, for she was thoughtful. Calm, happy and thankful, her heart swelling with gratitude to the great Creator; the air felt more balmy and fresher than it had ever before done; and, to her fancy, gave a sweet perfume. The leaves and the grass

looked green, as they only do in very early spring.

Ellen walked on to her long-forgotten garden, and there, peeping from the dark green leaves, was a clear white Snow-drop,—looking pure as snow,—its head hanging gracefully. She picked it, hastily, and flew with it to her mamma. “Here, dearest mamma, is my first flower,—the first of the year,—and the first you have seen since your illness; I shall now love snow-drops better than ever; and,” added Ellen, ingenuously, “they will also remind me of a foolish, and, I almost think, a wicked wish, I once had, for winter to be over. I see, now, how wrong it is, when we are well and happy, to be anxious for the present time

to pass away.—The winter departed, and what trouble I was in, on the first day of spring; ah! mamma, you were ill:—I shall never forget it.”

Mrs. Grey kissed her dear child, and said she was pleased to find her capable of profiting by past events; telling her that she should keep the Snow-drop while she lived, as her dear Ellen’s gift; “Nor,” Mrs. Grey continued, “shall I ever forget how attentive and good my little girl was to me during my long illness;—and I trust, God will spare us to each other for many years to come.”

It will please my little readers to hear, that Ellen and her mamma are still alive; Ellen grown up an amiable young woman, whom every one

loves for her uniform goodness and kindness ; and Mrs. Grey is, you may be sure, a happy mamma. She still keeps Ellen's Snow-drop, though withered, carefully in her dressing case ; and never regrets an illness, which called into action the good disposition and affectionate feelings of her child.

F



MAY FLOWERS;

OR,

LUCY LLYN.

ONE evening, I was strolling
Through a little country town ;
The flowers were closing for the night,
And the sun was going down :
Musing, the old church-yard I sought,
Where the dead slept silently :
And I thought how sad a thing it was.
For the young and gay to die !
When, a merry voice fell on my ear,
And a bounding step brushed by.

I turned, and saw a little child
Beneath the hawthorn tree,
That shaded a green corner there,
Not many yards from me;
She was pulling from its loaded boughs
The beautiful May flowers,
And laughing as they covered her
With white and fragrant showers ;
Aye! laughing as we only can
In childhood's earliest hours.

I said “ ‘Tis late, my little girl,
To make a wreath to-night;
You should have twined it in the morn,
By the waking sun-beams’ light.”
“ I did make one, of cowslips, then;
And it decks the green to-day,
And it is much the prettiest there!
So they, who’ve seen it, say;
But, then, it does not smell so sweet
As a garland of White May.

“ And if you here should be again,
When the May-tree blooms, next year,
And come into the church-yard, then,
You’re sure to find me here:—
Beneath the same old White May tree,
Where the grass is always green,
And the sweet violets, at its root,
Are the bluest ever seen.

Then, don’t forget to look for me!
My name is Lucy Llyn.”

Ah! little knew that happy child,
As her heart with gladness leaped,
That her promise, made so gaily,
So sadly would be kept.
Another checkered year passed by,
And another May-day came;
Within the church-yard’s bounds I stood,
By the old white tree again;—
But I heard no sound of laughter,
Nor young voice call my name.

For, close beneath the hawthorn,
There was a little grave,
And on its sides, already,
The grass began to wave;
The simple words there written,
Were, "Lucy Llyn, aged seven!"
And the failing hawthorn blossoms,
Above her still were driven;
But she scented not their sweetness,—
For Her May-day was in Heaven!

M.



THE WALL-FLOWER;

OR,

LITTLE MARY.



THE sun rose brightly, one morning, in April; and its light fell upon the sleeping face of many a happy child, waking, some to the beautiful day before them, and giving others sweet dreams of all glad things.

One little room, too, it tried hard to enter, in a narrow dark street, in the great town of London; but it only threw light enough there, to wake poor little Mary, the flower girl, from her short sleep; she rose,

with a weary sigh, from her hard mattress, and after kissing her little brother, who was still sleeping, softly and quietly, she tied on her worn and scanty garments, and put on her bonnet, to go out.

In one corner of the room stood her wicker basket, and on the table was a jug, containing her stock of flowers; there were but two bunches in it, and they looked dusty and faded; she took them up singly, and dipping their drooping heads into the water, trimmed them with her little thin hands, and tried to open their leaves; but her efforts were of no use; the beauty of the flowers was fast going, and she feared they must die.

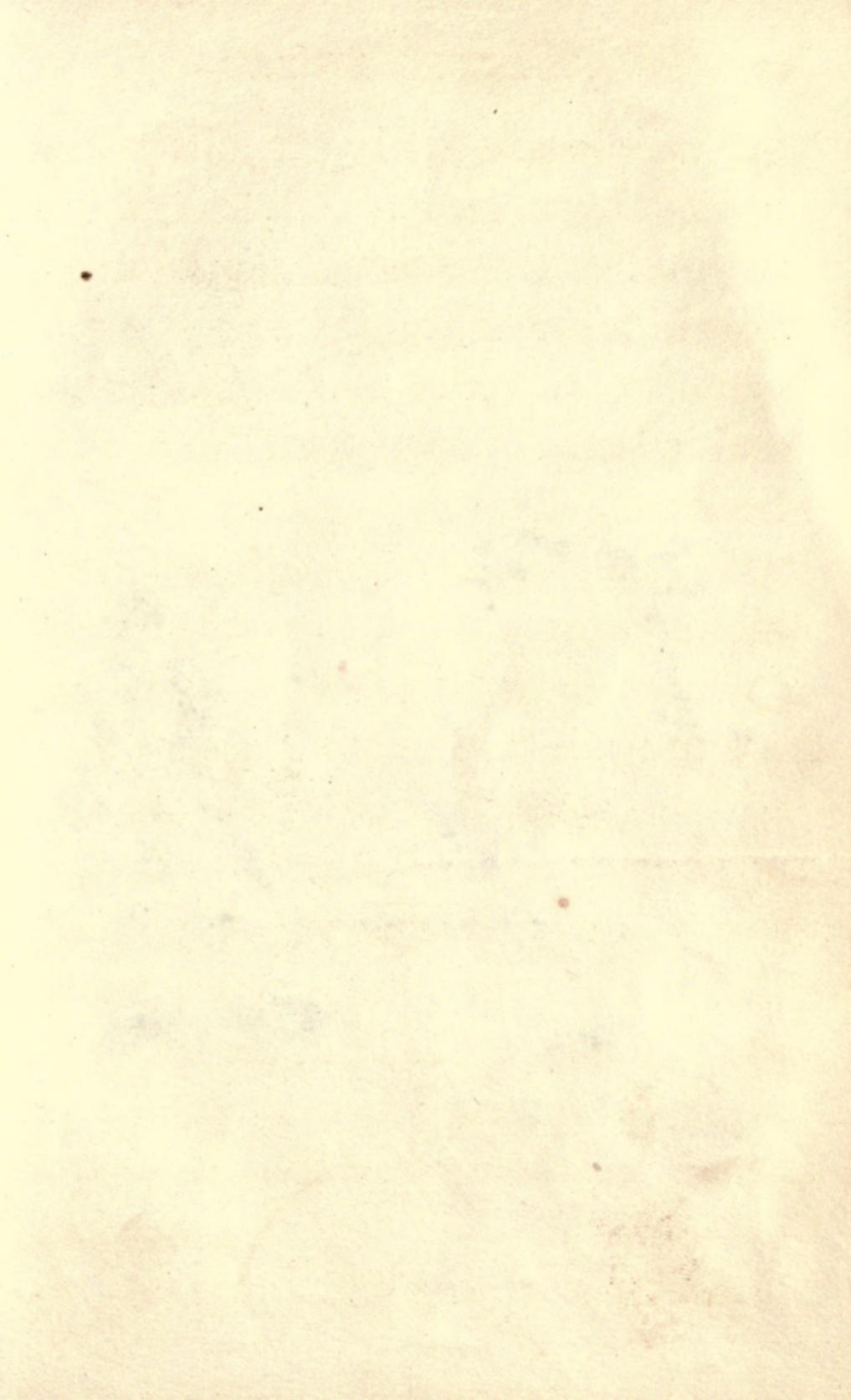
Poor Mary almost wished she

might die too, like those flowers; but when she looked at the calm face of her little brother, she thought how dark and how cheerless his life would be without her.

Mary's father and mother had both died long before, and left their children alone in the world. They had been very poor ignorant people, and not able to teach their children any thing that might have made them happy to think about.

Mary struggled on for Willie's sake; and day by day she stood at the carriage doors, and held up her flowers, hoping the gay people sitting in the carriages would pity her, and buy her flowers; but alas! often, too often, the wheels rolled on, and the little flower girl was unnoticed.

There was one thing, besides her brother, that poor Mary loved, and that was the sweet-scented Wall-flower in the broken blue jug on the window-sill. She had watched it, and watered it for years, and now her heart clung to it, almost as if it were another brother. She knew the very number of leaves upon it, and the shape of each one separately; as well she might, for she would count them over and over again, out of very love for her flower. This spring, though it was yet only April, the leaves were large and strong, the plant was in full bloom, and every breath of air that came into the room, brought some of its sweet-ness. Before Mary went down stairs that morning, she turned its flowers





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to the sun, and watered it carefully; last of all, she looked at Willie, but did not disturb him, for he seemed happy asleep, and there was no breakfast for him when he awoke, unless she should be so fortunate as to sell her flowers.

She was soon in the streets with her basket, where she saw little children almost dancing along by their nurses' sides,—they were so glad it was a fine morning;—and they were telling each other of all the pleasant things they would do when summer came. An old man, leading a little boy, stopped to look at her flowers; but the child said, “Grand-father, I do not like those, they are ugly faded ones:” and the man and child passed on. Oh ! what a sor-

rowful feeling the words of that little boy excited in Mary's heart !

The morning wore on, and though she had failed to get any money, our poor little flower-girl was obliged to return home, weary and hungry. How sad she felt, on entering her little attic again, to see Willie leaning against the window, and saying to himself, in a complaining voice, "I am so hungry,—so hungry,"—and knowing she had not the smallest crust to give him to eat.

When he heard her footstep, he looked round, and said quickly, "Mary, why don't we sell the wall-flower? we should have bread then." The little girl's voice trembled as she answered, "Yes, dear, we will try to sell it in the park, this afternoon."

She wished to speak calmly, but when she took the plant from the window-sill, and saw all its gold and brown blossoms, in their curly clusters, her love for it seemed strengthened, and she burst into tears. “Do not cry, Mary! that makes me more sad than all the rest,” said Willie, mournfully.

The poor children had nothing to detain them in-doors, so the little girl took up the plant, dried her eyes, and went out again, with her brother, into the busy crowd. As they passed along, they came to a church, and they waited at the porch to listen, for it was Lent, and service was going on inside. The people were singing; a moment more, and the voices and the organ

had ceased to be heard. Then the clergyman spoke in a clear voice;—he told of a beautiful world in heaven, where good people went to when they died, and where there was no weariness, no sighing. The children looked at one another wonderingly; they had never heard words like these before; the narrow grave had been, to their thoughts, the only end of life; and now, a bright heaven—a place of happiness,—was presented to their minds.

Hope, with her gentle voice, spoke to those uncared-for little ones; and when the congregation joined in the concluding prayer, they knelt down on the cold stones, and their trusting words, rising with those of the other worshippers, were borne by

angels swiftly through the clouds—the sky on, on to the very throne of God, and were, we hope, accepted by their Heavenly Parent.

When they rose from their knees, Mary knew not why, but the sun seemed brighter, the people's faces looked kinder, than they had done before; and she began to think, there must be a Providence, that would not let her and her little brother want, if she did her best to procure a living.

Just then, a little girl passed, and put a penny into Willie's hand. "Look, sister," he said, "now we can buy something to eat." So they went into a baker's shop, for a penny loaf, and then sat down on a doorstep to eat it.

Evening drew on;—the lamps in the streets were being lighted, one by one; little children were taking tea in nice warm nurseries; but poor Mary and her brother were still standing at Grosvenor gate, vainly trying to sell their plant. They were leaning against one of the pillars, little Willie's head resting on his sister's shoulder, and watching the last carriages rolling homewards.

On this same evening, three beautifully dressed little children were standing together at the window of a large house, overlooking the park. They had been playing so long at merry games, that they were quite tired, and were now amusing themselves by watching what was going on out of doors. “See that little

sleepy star, just peeping out of the skies, to take a look at us," said little Jessie ; " I am so fond of seeing the stars,—I always fancy they are the angels' flowers."

" Talking of flowers," returned Kate, " puts me in mind of a poorly clothed little girl, with a blooming wall-flower, who has been standing at the gate nearly all the afternoon, trying to sell it, and there she is still; I wish mamma would let me give her something, for she seems in real distress, and has a little pale boy with her, not older than Charlie; he looks ill, too."

" It cannot be a wall-flower she has," said Tom, " for they do not blossom so early in the season, in the open air."

“Indeed it is, Tom, for the child passed quite close to the school-room window, and I noticed it particularly.”

“Well,” cried Jessie, starting from her place, “I have a capital thought. You know to-day is my birth-day, and any favor I ask will be granted. Mamma,” she said, speaking to a lady who at that moment entered the room, “we have watched a poor little flower girl, nearly all day, trying to sell her plant, and no one has given her anything. I should so like to help her, mamma; may she come in, and speak to us?”

“Yes, Jessie dear, that she certainly may; I have observed her several times, myself, this afternoon; and you cannot end your happy

birth-day in a better manner than by relieving those two children, who appear to be suffering."

In a few moments more, our little Mary and her brother were brought into the room, and their simple tale of want and suffering went to the hearts of their young hearers. Mary told how she had cherished her wall-flower; how dearly she loved her little brother,—struggling on, for his sake;—and how she had, that day, heard words of hope and encouragement she should never forget.

The little Seymours, with one voice, promised to be her friends; and they now looked on her wall-flower without astonishment;—no wonder it was the earliest and most beautiful of the season, for never had any

plant been more tenderly nursed. Mrs. Seymour made enquiries as to the truth of Mary's statement, and finding it correct, became indeed a benefactress to her and her little brother.

Some years afterwards, our little flower girl might have been seen, with Willie at her side, in a snug little cottage on Mrs. Seymour's estate, in the country, plaiting baskets, now her usual occupation, and singing a gay song; while on the window sill, beside her, blossomed, in all its beauty, her favorite wall-flower; many cuttings from which has Mary raised, tending them with the same care she bestowed on the old plant. These she has the pleasure of presenting to her kind friends

on their birth days ; they are simple, but they are genuine tokens of a grateful heart.

M.

The Wall-Flower's scent is sweeter far,
As it waves beneath the evening star,

And the cold moon's pallid ray,
On the ruined castle's ancient wall,
Where broadly the deep'ning shadows fall,

Than, when in the heat of day,
It blossoms in the gay parterre,
And mingles with costlier flowers there.

So 'tis with us,—in our night of woe ;

We then those better feelings hail,
That otherwise we should not know ;—

Sorrow may teach, where joy may fail.

M.

ALMOND BLOSSOMS;

OR,

THE LITTLE ITALIAN BOY'S LAMENT.

'VE wandered far away
From my own dear mountain streams,
And those I love so dearly,
I see them but in dreams :
Alone I am in this strange land,
And, weary, too and fro
I pace amidst its crowded streets,
None heeding where I go.

Alas ! my mountain home ! shall I ever see thee more ;
Or welcomed be again at my humble cottage door ?

I sing my mountain songs
To the passers-by, in vain ;
They listen for a while,
Then pursue their course again :

They know not how, for home and friends,
The lone Italian sighs ;
How he yearns to see his native land,
Her clear and cloudless skies.

Alas ! my mountain home ! I shall never see thee more ;
Nor welcomed be again at my humble cottage door.

To-day, the first of joyous Spring,
I saw upon the earth
A fair pink Almond blossom,
Like those that owe their birth
To Italy's soft clime,
Where all is bright and clear,
And where such lovely flowers bloom
All seasons of the year.

Though trampled under careless feet, yet, in its early doom,
'Tis like the poor Italian,—he's dying far from home.

I'll cherish it, though blighted,
For still its sweet perfume
Recalls to mind my happier days,
My own Italian home !

Yet, ere these blossoms come again,
Before next early Spring,
I feel that I shall fade away,
Like this unnoticed thing.

Alas ! my mountain home ! I shall never see thee more ;
Nor welcomed be again at my humble cottage door.

Weep not, poor friendless boy,—
I pray thee, do not weep ;
Believe that, if God calleth you
To your eternal sleep,
That HE, who watches over all,
Will listen to your prayer,
And take you to a heavenly land,
Far brighter, far more fair :

There 'midst all glorious music, 'midst joys that never cease,
Thy cared-for soul, poor wanderer, will find eternal peace !

THE
COWSLIPS,
PRIMROSES AND DAISIES;
OR, THE
STORY OF JULIA.



JUST in front of the gates of one of the handsome villas, in the neighbourhood of the pretty town of Brenton, a group of girls and boys, with two attendants, stood waiting in the road, one fine bright morning.

Three patient-looking donkeys, smartly attired with crimson trappings and little silver bells, waited with them. The servants had charge of a large basket, evidently filled with

eatables, and plainly indicating that the happy party were going on a little pic-nic excursion ; nor could they have had a more lovely day for their amusement ; and no wonder that there were such shouts of laughter from the two fine active boys of twelve and thirteen, who, with five girls of different ages between fourteen and five, made up the number, who were all so eager to enjoy the holiday.

“ Now,” said Charles, I vote for going on, without asking Julia at all ; if she cannot come and speak to us at once, surely we need not wait for her.” “ No, indeed,” said several voices together,—“ why should we ? This is always the way with her ;—and after all, she only spoils our

pleasure whenever she does go with us anywhere; she is so proud and so conceited, and so”—“Hush! pray,” said Jessie, “here she comes; and you are all really unkind in your remarks about her.” Then, speaking to the young lady, as she walked towards them, Jessie continued, “Julia, dear, we are going to the Fairly meadows, to have a delightful long morning, picking daisies and all sorts of wild flowers; and then we intend to make a wreath, to give to the one we love best; will you be one of our party?”

“But those sort of flowers are so common,” said Julia.

“Oh! but it is the pleasure of looking for them, you know: and besides, to my mind, there is nothing more fresh and spring-like

than cowslips ; the very scent of them makes one think of bright long days, and every thing belonging to this beautiful month of May."

" Well, if mamma likes, I will go with you," said Julia ; speaking as if she was granting a favor. " I suppose we shall not go any where to get wet feet, or to tear our dresses."

" Why, you see," said Jessie, " as we cannot foretell, exactly, what our road may be, we are all prepared for such dangers ; we have thick shoes, our old bonnets, and our morning dresses."

" Oh, well, I will go and hear what mamma says ; but I dare say I shall soon feel tired of sauntering about in lanes and fields, and that sort of thing."

“ Well, be quick, that is all,” said Charles, quite out of patience, “ for we are losing our time.”

Julia walked quietly towards the house, and the little party began murmuring again to each other. “ Just like her,” said Henry, “ she is such an affected girl.—I say, Charles, if she does join us, we will go through Henly brook; and then, while the other girls ride over it on their donkeys, she will have to wade through it with you and me.”

“ I tell you what,” said Charles, “ I will not wait for her any longer; let us all go on, and leave her ladyship to find out that people will not conform to such stately behaviour.”

“ Yes, let us go on,” said the others.
“ No,” exclaimed Jessie, “ give her

five minutes by the old church clock, and then, if she is not here, we will go on."

"Ah, Jessie, that is like you; you are the friend of every body, and always good-natured. Well," continued Charles, "we agree to give her that time.—Watch the hands of the clock; and, Anne, you look down the avenue and call out boo, when you see her coming,"

The hands went slowly but surely over the agreed number of minutes, and the little party, Jessie excepted, with one accord, said "Hurrah, she is not in time!" and turned towards the long narrow lane that led to the Fairly meadows. Jessie followed reluctantly, telling the old gardener, however, to let Miss Julia know

exactly the road they had taken, and where they might all be found.

“You are too good by half, Jessie,” said Charles; “she is really a disagreeable girl, and so conceited, and makes such remarks. You know how my cheeks freckle in the sun;—so, the other day, she said, ‘Do you not dislike the warm weather? I do:—it tans and freckles one so:’—and at the same time fixing her eyes on me. ‘Not I,’ was my answer, ‘I should like to have one great freckle all over my face.’ Then she stared at me as if I was a wild Indian.”

“Well, but Charles, she is very pretty, every one says that.”

“Oh, I allow she has large dark eyes, and a fine colour, and a what-do-you-call-it nose.”

“A snub,” said little Bessie, very innocently.

“No, my dear; yours is of that order, but hers belongs to the Grecian form.”

At that moment, however, the beauties of the road began to engross their attention, as they entered the narrow lane, which they had to pass through in their way to Fairly Meadows. The little party here separating, some ran on in front, picking off the bright green moss from the roots of the gnarled oaks and lime trees; others plucked the little blue hare-bells, here presented in such profusion that the narrow banks on which they grew almost seemed studded with little turquoise stones. All were gay and merry,

and each found an agreeable employment. Charles and Henry exhibited their activity occasionally, by leaping over the stones and old roots of trees, that here and there lay in their way; they also sang some of their favorite songs; and were all life and gaiety. The young ladies noticed, however, that in the midst of their pranks the young gentlemen did not fail in politeness to them.

The donkeys were continually showing a desire to roll in the little brook; and then, trotting uneasily for about a minute, they would suddenly stand stock still, and resist all moderate efforts to make them move, until they themselves chose, and then off they went again for another little gallop.

At last, girls, boys, and donkeys, all arrived at the stile which led into Fairly meadows. Charles and Henry assisted their young companions in getting over the stile, and after securing the donkeys, leaped over it themselves.

The Fairly meadows looked quite drest out, as the young folks said, to receive them. The grass so fresh and green ; the daisies spangling every inch of ground ; so that a foot could scarcely tread without destroying some scores of these little wild Children of Spring.

And now each hand is fully occupied in gathering stores of them ; and while they are so happily employed, we will return to Julia Seymour.



Pl. 56.



Illustration
By



With a gentle hand, she opened her mamma's bed-room door, (for Mrs. Seymour was a great invalid, and scarcely ever able to come down from her room until late in the day.) Julia, therefore, entered without noise, and said, "Mamma, Jessie Stanly is here and several of our friends, and they have asked me to join them in a party to the Fairly meadows."

"It will be very agreeable for you, my dear, and you may certainly go; but pray do not forget to put on thick shoes."

"I would rather stay at home than do that, mamma, they tire me so, and are so ugly."

"Well, my dear, then pray take clogs."

Julia did not notice this desire of her kind parent, but asked, "Mamma, may I have a few conservatory flowers?"

"Oh! Julia, do not ask for those, you know we have but few, now: and besides what can you do with them?"

"Oh! the children are going to make wreaths, and I wish mine to be the prettiest; theirs will be only wild flowers. Now, mamma, you said I should have some this week."

Poor Mrs. Seymour was too weak to argue with Julia, who, taking a pair of garden scissors, went to the conservatory, and soon formed a beautiful bouquet of rare and lovely exotics. With these in her hand, she proceeded exultingly to the gate, and, of course, found her young

friends were gone. The gardener delivered his message, but Julia received it with great indignation, forgetting that the fault was entirely her own. She returned to her mamma, who advised her to take a servant, and follow her friends to the meadows. Julia set off, but in no very amiable mood.

Although it was early in May, the sun began to have great power, and before Julia arrived at the entrance of the narrow lane, she was warm and tired, and her pretty flowers were beginning to wither in her hot hands, under the sun's rays.

How different was her walk, alone, down the shady lane, from that of her joyous young friends in the early morning? she saw, as they did, the

lovely little wild flowers; the birds sang as sweetly, the little brook murmured as gently, and the cooling spring breezes wafted their sweet breath through the arched trees as healthfully; all, all as they did when the happy troop passed over the same ground; but they failed to attract Julia's attention,—her heart was sad; she fancied that not one of the companions she sought, looked forward with pleasure to seeing her; she felt that she was not liked, and that they asked her only from common civility.

Now Julia, with all her faults, was affectionate and warm-hearted, generous, and even noble in many of her impulses; but, unfortunately, she was the only child of a widowed and

invalid mother, who yielded too easily to her daughter's wishes on many occasions, when to have checked and controlled them would have been the kinder act. Thus nurtured, Julia became self-willed both in disposition and manner, and, consequently, disliked and unhappy.

Arrived at the before-mentioned stile, and seeing the donkeys tethered to the post, she knew that she was near the little party, and she desired her servant to return home.

A thick hedge divided her from her friends, but she heard their merry voices as they were all resting on the grass, and making up the wreath. Advancing a few steps, she heard Charles say, "Come, sing us a song, Jessie, like a good girl." Jessie re-

plied, “ You know, Charles, I cannot sing. Now, Julia, she is the one for singing; she has such a sweet voice: I wish she was here.” This Julia heard with pleasure, but, in the next moment, Charles’s reply filled her with anger and indignation: “ I would rather never hear another song, than have that disagreeable girl amongst us;—every body dislikes her; she grows worse every day;—so proud and conceited, that I expect she will soon find no one will play with her; even you, Jessie, will give her up.”

“ Yes,” said Anne, “ even the poor people dislike her, though she is so rich, and her mamma lets her give away double what ours can afford. Do you know, old dame White said

to mamma the other day,—‘Miss Seymour has been here, ma’am, and given me a golden sovereign ; but, lack-a-day ! she gave it as if I was dust under her feet ; and when I wished to thank her, ‘No thanks, I beg, (says she) I do my duty :’ and walked out without a kind word, only pushing my little grandchild, and saying to her, ‘Do not touch my dress with your dirty fingers.’”

“Well,” said little Bessie, “that is just like her. When she meets me with my nurse, she says to her mamma, ‘Don’t stop, I hate children ;’ as if she had not been one herself.”

“Shall you ever forget her airs and graces on last dancing day ?” said Henry. “Now,” he continued, “I

will just show you how she does her steps in the Quadrilles ; ” and, in a minute, poor Julia heard shouts of laughter, and knew that she was being imitated. With grief and anger she remained fixed to the spot, quite still, not knowing what to do. “ That’s it, Henry—head more erect, —now a little on one side,—now look round, to see if all eyes are admiring—and now fan gently.—Capital ! ”

“ Stop,” said Jessie, firmly, “ I cannot laugh; I am ashamed of you all; is this the way you would like to be treated yourselves? Is it generous or kind? You have told all poor Julia’s faults, but you have not mentioned any of her good qualities, or her kind actions: now, I will tell

you a few of them that I know to be true.

“When her poor nurse lay ill with the influenza, Julia gave up every pleasure to sit by her bedside reading to her, and doing all she could to relieve and amuse her. The invalid complaining of cold feet, her young and thoughtful friend sat up very late, to knit a pair of woollen socks for her dear nurse, as she called her.—And, only the other day, it was necessary for Julia to have a tooth taken out, and poor Mrs. Seymour was quite anxious and nervous about it. The affectionate girl, knowing how her mamma dreaded the operation, sent for the dentist, and had the tooth extracted, without letting her mamma know a

word of the matter until it was all over; and then she did not complain, although she suffered very much.

“She is charitable, too, though sometimes, as I must confess, her manner of giving is not the kindest.”

The good Jessie could not drop the defence of poor Julia, but added warmly, “Mamma was saying, only yesterday, how much she is to be pitied in having no one to guide her, and prevent her acquiring those unpleasant manners, that we and all her friends regret. Could poor Mrs. Seymour attend sufficiently to Julia, she would be a very nice girl, and one we might all love.”

Scarcely had the good Jessie finished her speech, when poor Julia,

her proud spirit yielding under Jessie's kind words, walked to them slowly, and said, with a great effort and with tears in her eyes,—“ I have heard every word ;—I did not intend to listen ;—but, when my name was mentioned, I could not help it.”

All the children hung down their heads, sorry and ashamed, and quite afraid of Julia's anger ; but when they ventured to look up, and saw she was weeping, they called out, “ Forgive us, dear Julia, we did not know you were near, and—” but she interrupted them : “ I am very glad I have overheard you ; I have received a lesson I shall never forget ; and, from this very day, I shall try to improve ; and, perhaps,” said she very timidly, “ you will all, then, try

to love me. As for Jessie, dear Jessie—never shall I cease to thank her for speaking of me so kindly ; and, if she will only tell me how to amend, I am sure I shall grow like her.”—And, dropping her fading flowers, she threw her arms round Jessie’s neck.

“ Look at my poor faded nosegay, Jessie, that I meant to triumph over you all with ; and look at your lovely wreath of cowslips, daisies, and primroses !—I will not envy the wearer of it,—for I know it must be Jessie ;—she wins every one’s love.”

Charles placed the wreath on Jessie’s brow ; but she gently took it off, whispering to her young friends ; and then, by general consent, laid it lightly on Julia’s head. The grati-

fied girl tried to refuse it, but “Keep it, dear Julia,” was exclaimed on all sides ;—“keep it, as a tie between us of renewed friendship.”

Sobbing with pleasure, Julia made reply, “Thank you, all ; I will keep it ;—even when faded, I will keep it ;—and if I ever again feel inclined to be haughty, or conceited, I will take one peep at my wreath, and I shall return to what is right. From this time, I shall love, more than all other flowers, Cowslips, Primroses, and Daisies.”

F.

